

Lesson Plan: Using Major Forms of Golden Age Theater to Discuss Choices in Daily Life
by Cristiano Moreira

Target: Advanced Progress Checkpoint

Knowledge and Skills: Demonstrate an understanding of the allegorical elements of the play and how they teach us about the importance of making right choices.

Grammar:

- Ser vs. Estar,
- Synonyms vs. antonyms

Objectives:

- Students will be able to understand the influence of allegory on Spanish Golden Age Theater plays (especially Convent Plays).
- Students will be able to understand the central message of Golden Age plays by better understanding Catholic tradition.
- Students will be able to capture why Sor Marcela chose to approach profound doctrinal topics in a humorous way.

Procedure:

- A day in advance the teacher should explain that Golden Age Theater plays took place in Spain around the time that the American Continent was being discovered and that the majority of the people in Spain at that time were Catholic Christians.
- The teacher should point out that understanding their culture and beliefs will not only help them better understand Golden Age Theater, but will help them understand how millions of people around the world deal with choices.
- Also discuss the vocabulary list and the plot summary in the convent play scene (La Muerte del Apetito) as homework.
- Explain that according to Roman Catholic doctrine there are seven holy virtues that oppose (antonyms) each of the seven deadly sins:

Vice (Apetito)	Virtue (Mortificación)
Lust	Chastity
Gluttony	Temperance
Greed	Charity
Sloth	Diligence
Wrath	Forgiveness
Envy	Kindness
Pride	Humility

- In the next class discuss the scene with the whole class to make sure everyone understand what they read.
- Brainstorm with the students how student or an actor would have to behave, speak, and dress to embody the allegorical figures that they've read about in the La Muerte del Apetito scene.
- You could even play a kind of charades game with them - with character names on 3x5" cards. They draw a card and have to act and speak like that allegorical character in the card using Ser vs. Estar.
- Discuss with the class the importance of choices in their own lives and the consequences linked to their choice. Some questions for discussion are provided below.

Discuss:

- Why is Alma so having a hard time in resisting Apetito's temptations?
- How Apetito tries to attract Mortificación?
- Why is it harder for Alma to follow Mortificación?
- Why is it so hard to choose virtues over vices in our daily lives?
- How does Alma feel about killing Apetito?
- How would you feel about killing your own appetites?
- What can we learn from this old convent play about choices in life?
- Why would humor help someone to better learn the importance of choosing what is right?

Teacher handout:

MAJOR FORMS OF GOLDEN AGE THEATER

I. Sub-genres of Golden Age Theater

- A. Explain that there are four major forms of Golden Age Theater plays
 - Auto Sacramental
 - Convent Plays
 - Comedia
 - Short One-Act Farces

II. Auto Sacramental

- A. Long One-act Religious Drama
- B. Theme: Mystery of the Holy Eucharist celebrated during Corpus Christi.
- C. Location of Performance: Streets (Carros)
- D. Examples of Plays: El gran teatro del mundo, El divino Orfeo, El pastor lobo
- E. Most Prominent Playwrights: Pedro Calderón de la Barca, Lope de Vega

III. Convent Play (Coloquio Espiritual)

- A. Long and Short One-act Religious Allegory Play
- B. Theme: Religion, Virtue, Spirituality, the Mystical Union, Holidays, Christmas.
- C. Location of Performance: Convent
- D. Examples of Plays: La Muerte del Apetito, Coloquio de las Virtudes
- E. Most Prominent Playwright: Sor Marcela de San Félix

IV. Comedia

- A. Three-act Play
- B. Theme: Honor, Love, Nobility, Lives of Saints
- C. Location of Performance: Corrales, Palaces
- D. Examples of Plays: Fuenteovejuna, La vida es sueño, El burlador de Sevilla
- E. Most Prominent Playwrights: Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, Calderón de la Barca

V. Short One-Act Comic Pieces

- A. Short One-act Play
- B. Theme: Satirical, Grotesque, Carnal, Festive
- C. Location of Performance: Corrales, Carros, Convents
- D. Examples of Plays: El retablo de las maravillas, La cueva de Salamanca
- E. Most Prominent Playwright: Miguel de Cervantes, Luis Quiñones de Benavente, Francisco de Quevedo
- F. Forms:
 - **Loa** - short theatrical piece used to introduce a play with the purpose of setting the mood and capturing the interest of the audience.
 - **Entremés** - short, comic theatrical performance of one act, usually played during the interlude of a performance of a long dramatic work.
 - **Mojiganga** - entertainment form of theatrical performance that mixes the entremés, dance and music, usually played during the interlude of a comedia.
 - **Baile** - is a short theatrical piece in the Spanish Golden Age tradition, consisting of an elaborate production number with singing and dancing, used between the acts of a comedia in place of the usual entremés.
 - **Fin de Fiesta** - short theatrical piece in the Spanish Golden Age tradition performed after the comedia in order to send the audience home in a festive mood.

PLAY STYLE:

COMEDIA
Acto I

COMEDIA
Acto II

COMEDIA
Acto III

ENTREMÉS

ENTREMÉS

LOA

BAILE

AUTO
SACRAMENTAL

MOJIGANGA

FIN DE FIESTA

COLOQUIO
ESPIRITUAL

LOA



